

Memorandum for the Files

On a Conversation with Walter Baird
At His Headquarters on April 20, 1944.

The Bairds came to their present location in 1897, the same year that Felipe Lucero settled at Big St. Nicholas. The Bairds bought out Joe Hendrickson, who also had run cattle. Joe Hendrickson had secured the property from a man named Davee. Davee built the rock houses at Fresno (junction of Salt and Ash Canyons). Baird said that he once had known who built the stone house (fireplace & 1 wall only now) at Ash Springs on the Jornada but couldn't recall the name. Joe Taylor built the "Joe Taylor" cabin in St. Nicholas Canyon at the Jornada boundary fence about 1906. "Charlie" Barber (C. M. Barber) was a friend of Gene Baird (Walter's older brother). Barber went to N.M.A.&M.A. & visited the Baird ranch. [See Halloran 1944 on the type locality of the New Mexico Desert Fox.]

Joe Tourney ran horses in San Andracito and when he sold out (1934) he gathered all that he could and sold the rest, about 250, to Walter Baird. They were gathered by a man named Chitwood from Tularosa.

When Dave Wood was a kid he roped a mountain sheep ram (in very poor shape) in his corral at Big St. Nicholas. The older men of his family had to rescue him as the ram trampled on him when he tried to remove the rope. In the 80's or early 90's Dan Achenbach killed an elk in the Organ Mts.

When the Bairds came on the range (1897) two "grizzlies" were known in the San Andres Mountains. These were killed soon, one being killed in "Long Canyon" (South Fork of San Andres Canyon) just north of Ropes. In '97, wolves were present in small numbers, but little was known of them and they were supposed to run in the mountains and not on the mesas.

Walter Baird does not remember any San Andres jaguar records. Several years ago he noted a red fox that used to bark at him as he rode (several times) near its den in Lostman Canyon.

He has seen "Focks Quail" (Mearns' quail) twice: once in Lostman Canyon & once in Mayberry Canyon (possibly 20-30 years ago.). He does not believe them to be resident but merely "passing through."

The basis of the local "Ibex" story is Walter Baird's observation. Several years ago Frank Andregg's father-in-law shot an animal. Walter saw the head at the present Andregg hqrs. in Deadman Canyon. The horns went back & curved, having definite knobby rings on them; there were at least two facial stripes. The Andregg dogs were said to have destroyed this, but Walter believes Andregg got scared and buried it. It may have been an old "Spanish" goat--nobody knows.

Sewell Well on the Jornada was dug for Joe Tourney by a Mr. Sewell; hence the name.

Baird Memorandum

Before Davee ran cattle on the eastern San Andres, the Wildy's had the range. Their headquarters were at the old W. W. Cox place on the east slope of the Organs near the north end. The Wildys ran cattle in the eastern San Andres clear to the White Sands area.

Walter also spoke of Bob Burch (who lived on the Goldenberg ranch) seeing sheep one early morning at Ropes Springs. I have forgotten the exact circumstances but it must have been in the late 80's or early 90's.

Walter also said that several years ago [probably about 20 or more] when in Alamogordo, he was being "hoo-rayed" by the Forest Supervisor about the presence of a herd of antelope in "The Sands" and at that time he also told him of the presence of the mountain sheep. Walter stated that there is but one antelope (an old buck) now on the ranch.

San Andres Natl. Wildlife Refuge
April 24, 1944


Arthur L. Halloran
Refuge Manager